

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF BIGGLESWADE JOINT COMMITTEE
HELD IN PERSON AND VIA ZOOM VIRTUAL MEETING AT
BIGGLESWADE TOWN COUNCIL OFFICES, THE OLD COURT HOUSE
4 SAFFRON ROAD, BIGGLESWADE, SG18 8DL
ON THURSDAY 14th JULY 2022 at 14:30 PM**

Present:	BTC: Cllr M North, Cllr M Russell (Deputy Chairman), Cllr C Thomas, Cllr G Fage CBC: Cllr I Bond, Cllr S Dixon, Cllr M Foster (Chairman), Cllr Dr Hayley Whittaker BTC Town Clerk & Chief Executive: Peter Tarrant BTC Head of Governance & Strategic Partnerships: Karim Hosseini BTC Place Shaping Manager: Isaac Lord BTC Deputy Administration & HR Manager: Sian van der Merwe
In Attendance:	CBC Community Engagement Manager: Sarah Hughes (via Zoom) CBC Place Programme Manager: Beverley Gaynor (via Zoom)
Members of the public:	One

Following a reminder to Meeting attendees that this is a formal meeting, the Chair advised that members of the public will be given an opportunity to speak during public open session but not at other times. The meeting is being filmed and by being present attendees are deemed to have agreed be filmed and to the use of those images and sound recordings. The Chair advised that attendees should not disclose any personal information of individuals as this would infringe the Data Protection Rights of the individual. The Chair asked everyone to mute their microphones when not speaking.

PART A - ADMINISTRATION

ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN

Cllr M Foster was re-elected as Chairman of the Committee.

ELECTION OF VICE CHAIRMAN

Cllr Russell was re-elected as Vice Chairman of the Committee.

CONFIRMATION OF SECRETARIAT

Cllr M Foster confirmed the Committee Membership as follows:

Biggleswade Town Council

Cllr M North
Cllr M Russell
Cllr C Thomas
Cllr H Ramsay

Central Bedfordshire Council

Cllr M Foster
Cllr I Bond
Cllr S Dixon
Cllr H Whittaker

Substitutes: Cllrs R Pullinger and D Albone

Substitute: Cllr T Stock

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Cllr Ramsay and Mark Eaton.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

- (a) Disclosable Pecuniary Interests in any agenda item – None declared.
- (b) Non-pecuniary interests in any agenda item – None declared.

PUBLIC OPEN SESSION

To adjourn for a period of 15 minutes to allow members of the public to put questions or to address the Committee, through the Chairman, pertaining to items listed on the Agenda. Each speaker to be allocated a three-minute speaking slot.

None.

CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS AND COMMUNICATIONS

None.

MINUTES OF MEETINGS

Members reviewed the Minutes of the Biggleswade Joint Committee Meeting of 14th April 2022 and requested the following amendments:

- Page 4 – Transportation Interchange: Amend “Russel” to “Russell”.

Subject to this amendment, these Minutes were **APPROVED** by the Committee.

MATTERS ARISING

Cllr Thomas commented on the replacement of pavers in the town centre with tarring. Cllr M Foster had an update from Mr Eaton and there was a need for further information to be supplied. Cllr Whittaker said that CBC's contract with Ringways Jacob did not stipulate replacement of surface cover with pavers. Ringways Jacob's contract with CBC is coming up for renewal and she suggested this be leveraged in any contract renewal discussions.

Cllr Russell asked for an update on the commencement of works on Lawrence Road, she has been liaising with Lisa Wright for three months with no resolution. Cllr Foster agreed to look into this.

PART B – ECONOMY AND TOWN CENTRE IMPROVEMENTS

Ms Hughes provided an update on Highways plans in Mr Eaton's absence due to the Highways contract procurement discussions.

- Locations where flooding has incurred on the A1 underpass near Mill Lane will be monitored and do not fall within the scope of the bank repairs.
- Lisa Wright has been asked to meet with the Town Council regarding Lawrence Road works and Ms Hughes agreed to prompt her again to initiate a response.
- Outstanding works on Sun Street will be carried out at night on 22nd July, letter are being sent to affected residents.
- Kitelands Road carriageway surface is in good condition.
- A copy of the Highways Plan is to be sent to Members of the Committee.

- CBC has adopted a risk-based approach to the creation of its Highways Plan based on a points-based criteria.
- Information on the Annual Highways Plan is on CBC's website.
- The Streetwise Team will continue to monitor Town Centre utilities works and replacement of surface with tar.

Cllr Foster said the Lawrence Road Works are on the Annual Highways Plans but have no start date. He would discuss with Mr Eaton.

Cllr Whittaker stated the Mead End footways are in a poor condition and she is working with Officers to get this onto this year's Capital Plan.

Cllr Fage requested it be minuted that the Lawrence Road works and Mead End footway resurfacing are a matter of priority over other works in Biggleswade. Cllr Whittaker advised that a Toucan crossing will be installed at the top of Chambers Way. Cllr Foster stated traffic flow on Lilac Grove needs to be re-addressed.

PART C - PLACE - KEY INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECT UPDATES

HOUSING INFRASTRUCTURE FUND (HIF) PROJECTS

Ms. Gaynor updated the Committee on the **Biggleswade HIF Programme**:

The Substation project:

Developers are working to discharge planning conditions. The super grid transformer M11 route has been approved and a formal report will follow.

Lindsell's Bridge:

A groundbreaking event is planned for 18th July 2022. Contractors are working on the detailed design to enable fabrication to commence and they are working to discharge planning conditions. A temporary access licence has been granted by the five landowners to aid progress on the education project.

Education Project:

A revised project proposal has been submitted to Homes England; an outcome will be issued in due course.

Cllr Foster reiterated the importance of this scheme and added that the Biggleswade Joint Committee would like to be involved in future planning and design schemes for Biggleswade's education provision.

Transportation Interchange:

The contractor is imminently due to commence works to support the Network Rail "Access for all" scheme and this scheme.

Cllr Russell updated the Committee that groundbreaking for this scheme is planned for 26th September.

Overall the HIF programme is on track and compliant.

STRATTON BUSINESS PARK

Ms Gaynor advised the Committee there is no actual Business Park Strategy and each planning application is considered and decided on a case-by-case basis.

SHARED PROSPERITY FUNDING

Ms Gaynor said CBC has been allocated £3.5 million over the next three years to tackle Communities & Place, Local Business Support and People & Skills programmes. CBC are working on providing an investment plan covering those programmes to submit to the Dept. for Levelling Up.

CBC will set up a local partnership group to lead the administration and direction of the fund which will be instrumental in picking the projects.

The deadline for submitting the investment plans is 1st September 2022.

LEVELLING UP FUND

The deadline to apply for this funding will be notified when the website goes live, with a 2 week turnaround to complete and upload the confidential business cases.

NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

Cllr Russell advised this process is reaching its final stages, the Examiner's report has been produced with further comments and Officers are attending a meeting next week to discuss the final amendments. The Neighbourhood Plan is likely to go to referendum in September 2022.

Cllr Russell expressed her thanks to the Neighbourhood Plan Strategy Group for all their input over the length of this project.

SHARED HEALTH CARE MEETING

Members of the Town Council met with representatives from the local GP Surgeries, CBC Ward Councillors and Cllr Stock. The meeting was held under Chatham House Rules. A joint statement was commissioned and will be added to the next Town Council Meeting Agenda. This will be published by both the Town Council and the GP Surgeries.

Play Areas Strategy

Mr Hosseini advised the Committee that the Town Council is planning a phased play areas regeneration/replacement across Biggleswade over a five-year project. The Town Council launched a consultation in support of its application for a Public Works Loan Board loan. Officers have been obtaining quotes and investigating options for new play equipment which covers a large age and ability/disability spectrum. The first play area to be upgraded will be Franklins Recreation area.

Cllr Whittaker asked what other sources of funding were investigated and was advised that an unsuccessful bid was submitted to the National Lottery Fund. Cllr Whittaker was advised that regular safety checks are carried out on current equipment by qualified staff.

Isaac Lord updated on:

Queen's Jubilee Celebrations

The celebration events across two separate days were successful. Officers and Members are aware of some feedback from the Public regarding the limitation on numbers of people being able to enter. The Town Council are taking steps to ensure future events can host up to 5,000.

War Memorial Update

The War Memorial cleaning and letter restoration works are underway and Mr Lord thanked Ms Gaynor for her assistance in organising these restorative works.

The Town Council are planning on placing signs on the memorial encouraging children not to play on it. Cllr Russell asked the Town Council to consult the British Legion.

Remembrance Day Parade and Service

Plans are underway for this annual event, invited guests are confirmed and will include Ruth Bell the Deputy Lord Lieutenant of Bedfordshire and Cllr G Fage, Cllr Russell and Cllr Woodhead.

The Community Safety Group have volunteered to distribute the order of service leaflets on the day. A briefing will be held with people laying wreaths to prevent congestion near the memorial.

Market Square Planned Events

Planned events are Remembrance Sunday and the Christmas Lights Switch on. BTC will be supporting other events and will collaborate with CBC where necessary.

PART D – ITEMS REQUESTING ATTENTION BY CENTRAL BEDFORDSHIRE COUNCIL

Committee Overview

The Chairman asked for comments and suggestions relating to the purpose and objectives of the Committee.

- Cllr Whittaker recommended hosting the meetings in the evening to allow the public to attend.
- Mr Tarrant asked for consideration of key and interesting items to flow to the Biggleswade Community Engagement Forum.
- Cllr Whittaker suggested certain Town Council meetings could be opened to all Ward Members to attend to allow the flow of information from CBC-related activities to the Town Council.
- Cllr Thomas suggested a precis of discussions could be distributed to the Town Council before the minutes are available.
- Mr Tarrant commented that there is no communication or reporting channel to progress issues that are not being resolved effectively.
- Mr Tarrant suggested that if there was Officer and Member recognition of the Joint Committee there may be more effective communication.
- Cllr Whittaker recommended meetings resume being held at both CBC and Biggleswade Town Council offices.
- Cllr Russell asked if CBC is still holding scrutiny and overview meetings, that forum could be informed of Joint Committee meetings outcomes.

Ms Hughes advised the Committee that the Terms of Reference of the Joint Committee are in the CBC Constitution. She suggested inviting members of the Biggleswade Community Engagement Forum or other active community groups to be able to sit around the table with Members, this might also lead to a broadening of the agenda items.

Ms Hughes advised Members that the CBC Chair is able to take issues from the Joint Committee meetings to CBC's Monitoring Officer, who then has the option to allocate it to a CBC Overview and Scrutiny Committee for consideration.

Cllr Foster asked for S106 funding to feature on future meetings. Ms Hughes indicated that the parish lists of S106 funding secured is on the CBC website and town /parish councils can and do play a role influencing S106 requests through completion of surveys for Community Buildings and for various Leisure provision which provide the evidence base for securing S106 from new development.

Cllr Foster stated Officers and the Chairman will be meeting well in advance of the next meeting to discuss items to be placed on the agenda.

It was **RESOLVED** that S106 funding available for Community Facilities be brought to the next meeting so that the Committee is made aware of what funding will be spent on, the processes for the spend, geographical limitations on spending and the deadlines relating to each S106 pot.

Work Plan for 2022/2023

Members were advised of the change of the Work Plan. Members of the Joint Committee will be contacted in advance by the Secretariat for suggestions on topics Members would like to discuss.

Cllr Bond requested the educational project on the Work Plan be moved to the HIF Project.

Cllr Fage requested the Town Council's work plan be brought to the Town Council to review.

The Chairman closed the meeting at 4:10 pm